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## Russian Federation

### Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

## The Russian Veterinary Service is Modernizing 2005

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**Report Highlights:**

Russian and European Union (EU) government representatives signed an agreement that beginning March 2006, all transit information regarding livestock commodities from the EU will be sent to Russia's Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance Service (VPSS) electronically. In addition, the VPSS agreed to loosen its requirements on a number of animal-origin products from the EU as well as to limit import restrictions to individual member states during animal disease outbreaks instead of to all EU members.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Moscow [RS1]  
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## Summary

Beginning March 2006, The Russian Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance Service (VPSS) will receive all necessary information concerning the transit of livestock commodities from the European Union (EU) electronically. This agreement was reached at a recent high-level meeting in Brussels between Russian and European veterinarians. In addition, the VPSS has agreed to modify the language to their EU veterinary certificates that establishes less stringent requirements for a number of food products of animal origin as long as the products are in compliance with "international quality standards". The changes include regionalizing livestock diseases, including bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), African swine fever and others.

### VPSS to receive transit information electronically from the EU

Sergey Dankvert, Head of the VPSS, stated after negotiations with EU Commission representatives on veterinary issues that beginning in March 2006 Russian veterinarians will receive all necessary information concerning the transit of livestock commodities from the EU electronically. He claims that this will ensure the quality of imported products.

Dankvert expressed his hope that the new system would help keep tighten controls on the movement of meat products into Russia. "Lithuania, for example, has considerably increased the volume of their meat exports to Russia over the last several years", Dankvert said. He went on to say, "There can't be that many pigs in Lithuania, that is why we assume that sometimes unauthorized Chinese pork and Indian Buffalo meat is shipped over here under the guise of Lithuanian pork fat and by-products". In the past year, Russia's veterinary authorities have closed their market to agricultural products from numerous countries such as Poland, Belarus and Lithuania due to allegations of frequent falsification of special export certificates.

### VPSS plans to ease import procedures of EU livestock products

Another significant agricultural trade development to come out of the negotiations between Russia and the EU was an agreement to revise the language of veterinary certificates. Russia will now temporarily ban only individual member states when animal diseases are detected unlike before when the ban would include all member states. Dankvert said, "VPSS will insert changes to the EU veterinary certificates with less stringent requirements to a number of food products of animal origin, that are in compliance with international quality standards". The changes will soften requirements by regionalizing livestock diseases, particularly BSE, African swine fever, and others. Dankvert insists that that quality and safety of imported meat products will not suffer as a result of this new agreement.

## Comment

President Putin recently announced his "National Priority Projects", which will place USD 5 billion into four key sectors, including agriculture. The easing up of import procedures of livestock products is due in most part to Russia's desire to import 50,000 head of improved dairy cattle and 11,000 head of pedigree swine from Europe as part of the agriculture project's livestock development initiative.